

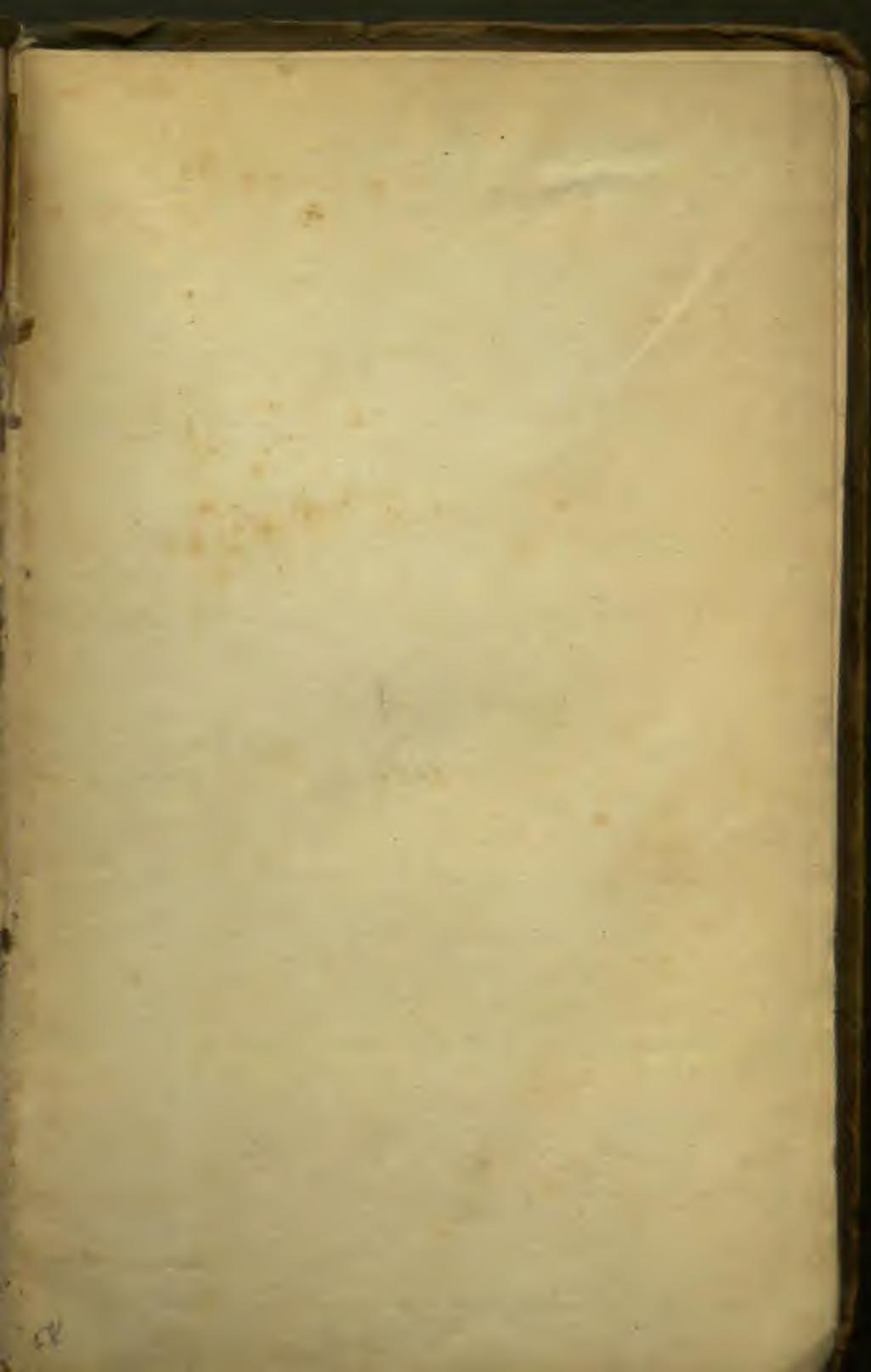
W.W. Scott

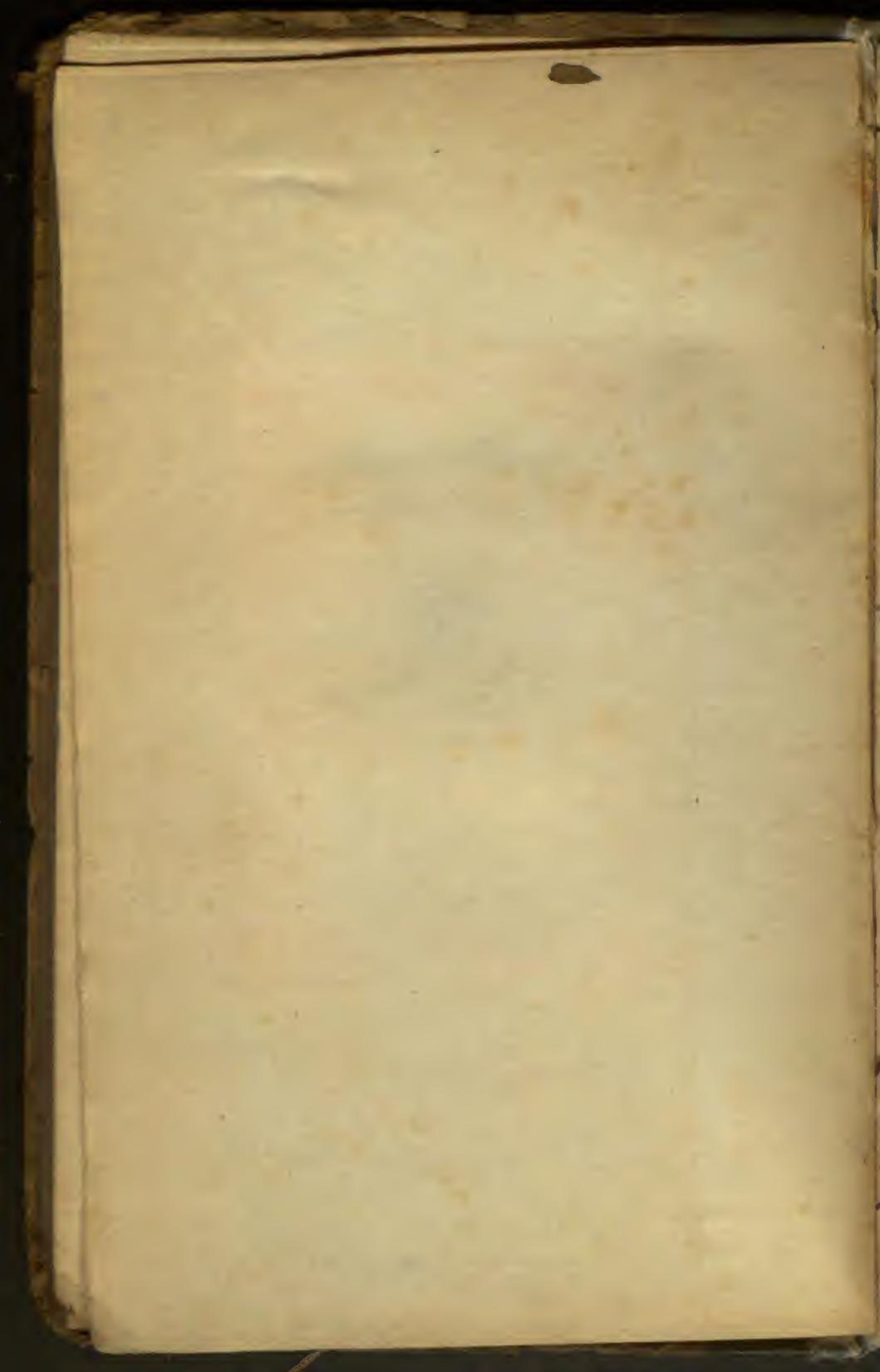
Bryn Mawr
College Library



From the Library
of

Seymour
Adelman





ON

TENNIS.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY C. ROWORTH, BELL YARD,

TEMPLE BAR.

A

TREATISE

ON

TENNIS.

BY

R. Sutton

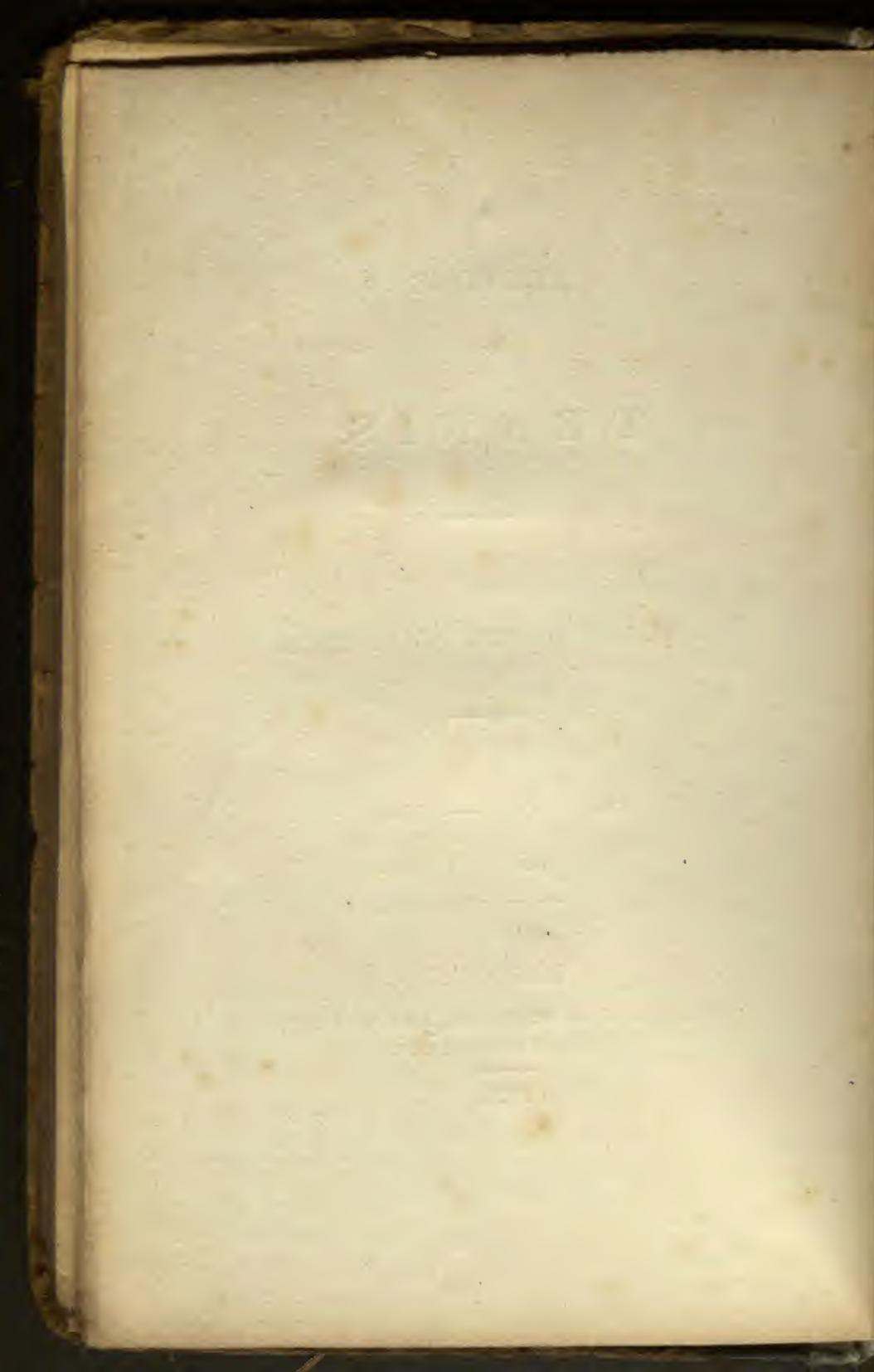
A MEMBER OF THE TENNIS CLUB.

Nec lusisse pudet. — HOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR RODWELL AND MARTIN,
NEW BOND STREET.

1822.



TO
HIS GRACE
GEORGE WILLIAM
DUKE OF ARGYLL,
AN ARDENT ADMIRER AND PATRON OF
THE GAME OF TENNIS,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE,
WITH HIS GRACE'S OBLIGING PERMISSION,
BUT WITH A DUE SENSE OF THEIR IMPERFECTIONS,
MOST HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED,
BY HIS VERY OBLIGED
AND VERY FAITHFUL
HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

卷之三

詩經卷之三

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
INTRODUCTION	1
Antiquity of the Game	3
Its preference to Cricket	5
Qualifications necessary to make a great Player	8
The necessity of acquiring a good Style	12
The Duty of Markers	14
On the Service	19
On Striking out	25
On Cutting	29
On the Twist	33
On the Volley	35
On the Half Volley	38
On the Boast	39
On Forcing	41
On Stopping	43
The Coup de Tems	45
On Judgment	46
On Playing for and Defending Chases	49
On Playing to the Half Court	51
On Double Matches	54

On the Match of Three	58
On Barring the Side Walls	60
On Touch no Walls	62
Rules for Taking Bisques	64
On the Racket	70
Great Activity not a necessary Qualification	72
The Importance of ascertaining the Position of the Adversary before the Ball is played	74
Address, its Importance	76
On Holding the Racket	<i>ib.</i>
Position of the Player after the Service is given	77
Patience, Perseverance, and Good Temper—their im- portance	82

APPENDIX,

Containing the usual Dimensions of a Tennis Court ; Use of the Chases; Reckoning of the Game ; Odds or Advantage given or received. Also Rules of the Game as observed in the Courts in London, and a Table of the Odds as usually betted	87
---	----

NOTE

Relative to the Antiquity of the Game	113
---	-----

ON TENNIS.

INTRODUCTION.

TENNIS is universally admitted to hold the first rank amongst games of manual skill; whilst the great and deserved estimation which it has for ages borne in the most enlightened countries, and the character which it still maintains in the higher classes of society, as a manly and scientific amusement, give it unquestionably a value and interest beyond what is usually attached to subjects of

this nature. Under these impressions, and, in some measure, to supply the want of any regular Treatise on the game, I have been induced to write the following pages, and am willing to think, that however much they may fail to interest the bulk of the public, they will at least not be unacceptable to the admirers and promoters of so noble and celebrated an exercise.

It now remains for me to entreat the indulgence of the Reader, whilst I endeavour to give some idea of the peculiar excellency of this game, and lay down such rules and instructions, as may be serviceable to those who aspire to become Proficients.

Tennis, in its infancy, appears to have had very little resemblance to its present character, since we collect from its very appellation in the French language (*la*

Paume,) that the ball was originally struck with the naked hand; afterwards thick or double gloves were occasionally used to defend the hand, and, at a later period, cords and tendons were fastened round the hand, in order to enable the Player to give a greater impulse to the ball, and from hence, unquestionably, the Racket derived its origin; probably about the year 1500.

The adoption of the Racket gave rise, no doubt, to various other improvements, both in the plan of the court and in the arrangement of those divisions and subdivisions so necessary to the better ascertaining the chases, and upon which so much of the beauty and nicety of the game is found to depend. So far back as the reigns of Henry the Seventh and Eighth of England, it appears to have assumed much of its present character,

and was a diversion in which Royalty itself was not unwilling to indulge. It is also evident that it was, as it is now, the great national game of France. The number of Tennis-courts in that country, the celebrity of their Players, and the French appellations, which are to this day retained by us, are all confirmatory of this position, if any confirmation were wanting. To that ingenious people therefore we may, without hesitation, ascribe the invention of this noble game; and place it among the earliest and most favorite amusements of their country.*

It has been imagined by some that “the Pila” of the ancients was the Tennis of the present day; but I can find nothing in any of the classical writers,

* The reader who may wish for further information respecting the antiquity of the game, will find it collected in a note, at the conclusion of the Appendix.

which tends to establish this notion. No terms or phrases occur, descriptive of the character of the game now under consideration. They are general and applicable to any exercise of which the bat and ball are the active and passive instruments; and yet a game of so much difficulty, of such fascination and attraction as Tennis, if it had existed in those days, in any degree of perfection, would hardly have escaped the observation of the biographer, poet, and historian.

The Game peculiar to this country, and which comes in any sort in competition with Tennis, is Cricket; but without entering into a view of the comparative skill required to excel in each, the latter game must be allowed to be open to the following great objections:—That it can only be played during a small part of the year;—that a match cannot be readily

made, on account of the number required to form it, and of the inconvenient length of time that it frequently engages the players;—that it is open to much jealousy and dispute in the distribution of its several parts; and that the *innings* of the best players are too precarious; inasmuch as the slightest accident may defeat the Hero of the piece.

Tennis, on the contrary, may be played at all times, and in all seasons. Two players are sufficient for a match, though it may embrace three or four. Players of the greatest disparity of force can be easily brought together, and that too by the custom of the game, without wounding the pride of the weaker party. A match may be lengthened or abridged to any given time.

But, to leave this comparison, Tennis may be truly said to embrace a portion

of the excellencies and beauties of all other games of manual skill; and while it is free from most of their imperfections, it exhibits an animated picture of the strength, skill, and activity of man, and is, at the same time, far removed from anything puerile or degrading to his nature. Tennis, in a word, demands the activity, perseverance and adroitness, necessary for Cricket; the precision required at Billiards, and the judgment exercised in both. Like Chess too, which is to the mind, what Tennis is to the body, there is no apparent limit to the degree of excellence that may be attained at it; there is always room for improvement in the best player, and it is not too much to presume, that a greater performer may hereafter arise, than any that has yet appeared.

There are so many requisites for play-

ing this game well, the want of any one of which, must, at least, preclude perfection, that the paucity of great Players can be no matter of wonder. In the enumeration of the qualities required to place a man amongst the first rank of Players, should be included, strength combined with activity, great flexibility of body, force and pliancy of wrist, quickness of eye, self-possession, perseverance, temper, and judgment; and to these should be added a mind full of resources, quick to discover the weakest part of his adversary's game, and to apply his own peculiar powers to the best advantage: for the body and mind, at Tennis, are equally upon the stretch, and as the hurry of action is unfavorable to the reflective part of the game, it is the last and most difficult acquirement, to recollect, in the vehemence of execution,

what it may be most judicious to endeavour to execute.

But in addition to this exertion of the mind, while the ball is in motion, there are other points which should in no sort be neglected, whenever any pause or interval afford time for more reflection.

Besides the score of the game, for the accuracy of which no good Player will be wholly dependent on the Marker, the character of the Chases, in relation to the position of the Game or the Set; the Bisques, if any are to be taken, and the choice of the sides in taking them, are matters which call for particular attention, and require great discrimination and judgment.

But I must leave this part of my subject, and hasten to inform the reader of the order and manner in which I propose to treat of this game.

The better to avoid confusion, I shall divide it under distinct heads; and, as many references must necessarily be made to different parts of the building constructed for Tennis, I shall subjoin, in an Appendix, a sketch, or ground-plan of the Court, with a reference to the name of each particular part; as also an enumeration of the Terms made use of in the game; the rules, manner of reckoning or marking it, with the different Odds or Advantage given by one player to another.

Few games can be taught by rule alone, and Tennis is, perhaps, less capable than any other of being so acquired,—it does not, however follow, that all written instruction must therefore be useless and unavailing. System and practice lead to perfection in all games; and it requires

no great depth of reasoning to show, that practice may be so directed by theory, as to attain its object in much less time, than if left unassisted, uninstructed and uncontrolled. Most of the rules and observations contained in this short work, pre-suppose a knowledge of the rudiments, at least, of the game. To talk of *boasting*, and *cutting*, and *volleying*, to a man who never saw a Tennis-court, would be to use the most difficult sea phrases to one who never saw salt water. And though, contrary to my original intention, and merely for the purpose of rendering this Treatise the more complete, I have given the sketch of a Tennis-court, with the terms made use of in play, yet the rules, observations, arguments and deductions, which I have ventured to submit, cannot be well understood or appreciated, but by those who have made some

progress in acquiring a knowledge of this diversion.

As it is of the first importance to acquire a good and graceful style at this game, the attitude of the Player, when in the act of striking the ball, should be particularly attended to. To give him a posture at once commanding and easy, let his knees be moderately bent, his legs sufficiently apart to insure firmness to his position, and his body gently inclined forward,—further, he should place himself at an easy distance from the ball, and keep the head or bow of his racket above the line of his wrist, supposing the ball to be at a moderate elevation from the floor. If it be a ball to the *forehand*, the *left* foot should be somewhat advanced; if one to the *back hand*, the *right* foot should be extended foremost; and when *preparing* to strike,

the Player should raise himself a little upon the ball of his feet, and sink again upon the heel at the moment of striking; not allowing, however, at any time, either foot to quit the ground entirely. It need hardly be remarked, that this collected and regulated position of the body cannot be attended to on all occasions, and will admit of being adopted only where the balls can be accurately and deliberately judged,—but whenever this can be done, the carriage and proper adjustment of the body must not be neglected; for depend upon it, the Player whose posture is graceful, who strikes the ball with ease, who, though earnest, is yet calm and collected, will, in the end, acquire a greater perfection at this game, than he, who unmindful of these nicer points, contracts an uncouth, hurried, and bustling style of play. As, however, written rules

cannot be expected to go far, in enforcing these considerations, some observations on the duty and qualifications of Markers, upon whom, in this respect, so much depends, will not, I conceive, be deemed superfluous. The Score of the game and the Marking, to which they are but too apt to confine their whole attention, form but a small part of their duty; with them it rests to instruct the novice in what manner the Racket should be held, and in what position the body should be placed, and how varied, for this or that description of ball.*

A Marker may be expected also so far to anticipate the judgment of the ball, as to put the young Player on his guard,

* These observations upon the duty of Markers apply to them only in their character of Instructors. In matches between Players who understand the game, their advice, or interference of any kind, can in no sort be allowed.

by directing him to retreat or advance, as the occasion may require, and to stoop when necessary.* Yet at most of the inferior and provincial Courts, little attention is paid by Markers to these points, upon which probably hinge the future style of the young Player. The Beginner thus left to himself is led to adopt that mode of striking the ball, which he can execute with most facility and apparent ease. But as in handicrafts, so at Tennis, the right way is seldom the easiest to acquire; yet there is unquestionably a right way, that is, a right style or method, not founded upon any absolute law, but resulting from the long ex-

* The words "She stoops to conquer," have often been humorously and well applied to Players at Tennis,—for they can hardly stoop too much, particularly for balls on the floor, but they are never to sink down so low as to lose the power of recovering their natural position, readily and with ease.

perience of competent judges, and which if pursued, will carry the Tennis-player with most certainty to the highest pitch of perfection of which he is capable. Let no young Player then be above receiving instruction, nor the Instructor consider any time or attention misapplied which is occupied in giving to those who are eager to excel in this game, a just conception of its first principles and rudiments.

It must, however, be admitted that the best intentions of Markers are sometimes thwarted, not only by the carelessness and obstinacy, but by the avarice of the learner. I allude to a propensity, not uncommon in young men, to play for too high a stake; when this happens, style is but too frequently sacrificed to the desire of gain. For the sake of a temporary advantage, any position, however awk-

ward, any trick or device, however unsightly, will be resorted to: the object and only object being to gain the Set, the Player is satisfied if the ball be but returned, no matter how. From this cause it is that many Players will use every exertion to cross the *line of the ball*, that is, to get on the other side of it when played to their *back-hand*, in order to return it with somewhat more effect by a *fore-hand stroke*. Now this is not Tennis, not Tennis at least of the first order; nevertheless, I will not contend that no circumstances can arise to make an occasional resort to this practice justifiable. In the case of very slow balls, or of such as falling upon the Penthouse allow time for choice, the Player is at liberty to use his *fore-hand*; but whenever he is too studious and eager to do so, he is betrayed into the admission of a defect, and that a

material one in the *back-hand*. Now to admit a defect, is to tell your adversary where to make his attack. This should be carefully avoided. But it may be said that he will not be long ignorant of your weak point, whatever pains you may take to conceal it: it may be so. Let him, however, discover it in any way rather than by your own confession. But to return.

When the Player shall have acquired some degree of manual skill, it will be the duty of the Marker to direct his attention to those parts of the game which concern the head rather than the hand. He should be taught the value of the different descriptions of Odds given or received, where best to place himself for the defence of the *whole* or *half court*, what balls to *volley* and what to let pass, and generally every thing which may tend to form

his judgment and advance him in the *scientific* part of the game.

Markers, generally speaking, are such expert players, that there is no occasion to dwell on their qualifications. They are seldom without the means of giving good instructions. All one requires of them is willingness and attention.

I shall now proceed to treat of the Service, as the opening of the game, and therefore properly the first in order.

ON THE SERVICE.

The Service has been emphatically and very truly termed by the French “l'âme du jeu,” for upon it rests the issue of the majority of Sets that are played. No one can be an attentive spectator of the game without observing its influence and

effect. A good Service, like a good opening at Chess, generally gains the attack (no small advantage); whereas, on the contrary, by a bad Service, that is, by a Service, which your adversary can place where and how he pleases with the greatest facility, the attack is lost, and you are left from that moment on the defensive. The contest being supposed in this instance to lay between two players of equal force and of sufficient proficiency to take advantage of each other's faults. Indeed I would wish this to be so understood throughout the whole work, unless distinctly expressed otherwise.

It would be tedious and almost impossible to mention every description of Service. The Services are as various as the genius of the several Players; but those most in use are, the common *Side-wall*, the

Drop, and the under-hand *Twist* or *Nick*.*

A Player, to give the *Side-wall* Service with the best effect, should stand a little on the right hand of the division line of the Court, and advanced nearly up to the *blue-line*. The angle from this position will be sufficient, and he will be able to return to his place in time to receive the ball if returned.

The best *Drop* is when the ball is tossed high, strikes the Penthouse but once, and on its bound from the floor barely reaches the end-wall. This description of Service

* There is another description of Service which the French term "le service martelé ou piqué," because it is hammered upon the penthouse. It is a Service very much in use, and tells particularly against young Players, as the ball shoots upon the Player with great rapidity after it touches the floor and end-wall.

To give this Service, you must stand near the Penthouse, and strike the ball with an over-hand twist.

is calculated to embarrass the Adversary by leaving him no room to strike the ball with security and effect.

In giving the Twist or Nick Service, the Player should stand as near to the Penthouse as he conveniently can, and advanced in the Court as far as the Chase 3 or 4, though some consider this Service can be given with better effect from chase 2. The best Twist Service is that which touches the Penthouse but once and springs from thence to the bottom of the end-wall. If it reach the end-wall, it will be either a Nick or so nearly approaching to one as to render it difficult to place, if not to return.

A Service may, however, be good of its kind, yet ill selected; its excellence will chiefly depend on its suitableness to the occasion. Let us suppose a case where your Adversary has to play for a

very close chase. The Service in this instance should by no means be one to bring him forward in the Court, because it would thereby afford him a better chance of hitting the Dedans, while it would lessen the probability of your parrying it. The best Service on this occasion is, in my opinion, a Drop, and that, if possible, given so as to fall short of the end-wall. This, if well executed, cannot be forced with any effect except from the Penthouse, a Stroke of much hazard and difficulty. It is useful also to vary the Service whenever you find that your Adversary has learned to judge with accuracy and play with confidence those which you are in the habit of giving. A stubborn adherence to one description of Service on all occasions, and against all Players, betrays evident want of judgment. It may, however, become a ques-

tion whether it be not advisable to adopt one Service for all *common* occasions, to become perfect in it by repetition, and to make it, as it were, your own. Indeed this is generally done, whether from any fixed plan or not I will not say; but it is observable that the Service is generally a leading and distinct feature in the character of each man's play. The latter observations may at first sight appear to contradict what has been previously advanced upon the benefit of changing the Service; but the accurate observer will no doubt discover my object, which has been to show that a good Player should have a variety of Services at command, to be severally produced as occasions may arise, yet may still have one peculiar to himself; one which from repeated use he can give with most certainty and effect.

ON STRIKING OUT.

To strike out, or as the French term is “primer,” from its being the first ball played after the game is opened with the Service, falls next under consideration. To execute this part of the game well, is not perhaps second to the Service in importance. Indeed my own observation has led me to think, that the best Players (I mean here, Markers,) excel amateurs in this point in a greater degree than in any other. The power they possess of placing the Service on either side of the Court, with almost equal facility and effect, varying it occasionally for the Dedans, and covering their intention, forms the marked superiority of their game. In playing against a Marker, this is most sensibly felt. One labours ineffectually

from side to side, without being able to reach his balls, and if by great effort this is done, one is so little collected or in shape, as seldom to be able to play them with effect.

The object of the Player in *striking out* is to make *close chases*, or to win those which have been made by his Adversary, for which purpose he should place his balls as near to the Side-walls as possible, and so as to touch them in the first bound. They should also be played, as near as may be, to the length of the Court, by which is meant, that the ball should just reach the End-wall, at the extent of the first bound. This is, however, so difficult to execute with any certainty, that recourse is generally had to what is termed “cutting the ball,” as a means of obtaining, with less risk, the object in view, namely, that of confining its bound with-

in narrower limits. Of the principle of “cutting,” more will be said hereafter. It is only mentioned here as a feature, and a principal feature, in Striking Out. As the playing or forcing for the Dedans falls properly under this head, some notice must be taken of it in this place. When a ball should be laid down, and when played for the Dedans, are questions that cannot be settled by any positive or distinct rules. It may depend upon your own power of *forcing* with precision, or upon your Adversary’s power of repelling it, or upon the character of the Chase, if any, and the description of ball to be forced. One can only say generally, that it is hazardous to *force* for the Dedans, in as much as the best Players frequently fail in striking it, and the consequence of failure is, in all probability, the loss of the Stroke. It is undoubtedly a

safer and surer game to play on the floor, and from side to side; more one could not say, it being a point, after all, for the discretion of the Player.

I shall conclude with one further observation on Striking Out. Few can place the ball equally well on either side of the Court. It is, however, most important to acquire this power, for without it, you have no means of varying your attack or deceiving your Adversary. You are as one playing to the Half Court, not from choice, not from restriction, but from necessity.

ON CUTTING.

To cut a ball, the Racket should be firmly grasped at the moment of striking, and applied in an oblique direction, the angle being varied according to the height of the ball from the ground at the time it is struck. Much therefore must of course depend upon the proper inclination of the Racket to the ball at the instant of percussion, both in regard to securing its due elevation, and to giving it that particular motion which constitutes it a "Cut Ball." To effect the latter purpose, the impulse conveyed to the Racket should proceed more immedately from the wrist than from the arm and body, it being found that a quickness, effect, and point are communicated to the ball by the wrist,

which no other manner of striking it will produce.

Thus the art of *cutting the Ball* is one of great nicety, and can no more be obtained without long practice than the bow can be made to draw fine tones from the violin by an unskilful hand ; the touch in some cases is hardly less regulated or delicate. By this action of the Striker, the ball receives a rotatory and vertical motion, and the effect is, that the rebound of the ball from the End-wall is suddenly checked, supposing always that it has previously touched the floor. The practical evidence of this cannot be disputed, though it may be difficult to explain it philosophically. The best exemplification that occurs to me is that of a wheel in rapid motion, which, if it comes in contact with any stationary body, will

instantly stop, reversing its motion. It is easy to conceive how great the advantage must be of acquiring this stroke thoroughly, since it gives the Player a great additional power of bringing his balls within a given space, an object of no small importance in the game, whilst the difficulty of returning them is greatly increased. It might not be easy, though curious, to ascertain the difference between the rebound of a well cut-ball and one struck in an ordinary* way, supposing them to be both impelled with equal force. It might, I think, be confidently asserted, that the rebound of the Cut-ball would be less by two thirds than that of the other, or in other words, a Chase of two instead of a Chase of six

* That is, by a Racket held perpendicular to the direction in which it is intended to impel the ball.

would result from the particular effect given to the ball of the Cut-stroke ; but while the Cut-ball has these advantages, it must not be forgotten that there is some risk in the performance, when the Player aims at too much severity. The slightest turn of the wrist in applying the Racket will so vary the elevation or depression of the ball, that it is extremely difficult to be “sure and severe” at the same time. It is this consideration that leads most of the best French Players to abate severity for the sake of certainty, and to seek to foil the Adversary by repetition and address, rather than by force and decision. The English Player, on the contrary, is all severity ; and if his first attack fail, he will endeavour to make his next with greater force, determined, as it would seem, to risk all, and rather to beat him-

self, than to allow this honor to his Adversary.*

These distinct modes of obtaining the same object are characteristic of the two nations, and might easily be exemplified in matters of much higher importance than the game of Tennis.

ON THE TWIST.

This Stroke partakes much of the nature of the Cut; the difference consisting in this—that the ball is struck sideways, giving it a rotatory and horizontal or spherical motion. The ball too, by this

* In giving the above description of the French and English Player, one must of course be considered as speaking of their character in general.—There will be found numerous exceptions; and though I am inclined to think that the character of the game is best understood by the French, I am far from admitting that they are universally the best Players. The English have shown themselves no despicable rivals, particularly of late years.

means, is projected in a curved instead of a straight line—it forms a parabola. The effect also, when it comes in contact with any of the surrounding walls, is very different to what it would be, if plainly hit. This difference is difficult of explanation; but certain it is, that the ball will form an angle on coming in contact with the side-wall, more or less acute, according as the twist shall have been given inwards or outwards—that is, towards or from the wall. A twisted ball played directly at or against a wall, perpendicular and opposite, will not rebound in the line of percussion, but will diverge and form an angle on the side on which it was struck or twisted, though reversely to the twist which it has received. Nothing therefore puts the judgment more to the trial, than this description of stroke. It is almost sure to foil a

young Player, and one more experienced, if he should have been for a moment inattentive to the Striker, will very probably be also deceived in the direction that the ball will take.

ON THE VOLLEY.

By Volleying, is to be understood the striking or meeting a ball with the Racket before it reaches the floor. This is a part of the Game most difficult to execute well, without appearing to be so. Any person totally ignorant of Tennis might readily imagine, that a ball could be kept up between two Players with as much ease as a Shuttle-cock. Yet so difficult is it, that any two Players who should volley a ball to and from each other for six or seven times together, at a fair distance, and with reasonable

strength, would be allowed to possess a very rare degree of skill. The truth is, a ball is thrown out of its direction by the smallest inaccuracy;—the slightest turn of the wrist, the application of too much or too little force, (not to mention the chance of failing altogether to return it,) are each sufficient to terminate such a Rest.

As, however, the Volley is difficult, so is it important;—it may be called the master-stroke of the Game, and should, like powers of the highest order, be reserved for great and pressing occasions. But how little is this attended to! Vanity is the fertile source of half the errors and mistakes at Tennis—and as to volley with grace and dexterity is an accomplishment in this Game of which the Player is naturally proud, he is too much inclined to introduce it at every oppor-

tunity, and thus, by misapplication, to discredit the greatest beauty of the Game; for little applause is given for a ball well volleyed, where it ought not to have been volleyed at all,—it is a risk unnecessarily incurred.

But for a word or two upon its particular use. In the first place,—it enables a Player, on the *Hazard Side*, to return with effect certain descriptions of Service, which, if allowed to fall, would be irretrievable. And secondly, it gives to the Player on the *Service Side* the means of occasionally foiling the best *Striking Out*, by arresting the progress of a severely cut or well placed ball. It has this advantage too, that it embarrasses by the suddenness and rapidity of the Return. Many more cases might be particularized, but the above will suffice to show the peculiar advantages of this

Stroke. Of the Stop, which is a species of the same Stroke, I shall speak hereafter.

ON THE HALF VOLLEY.

This Stroke, in some measure, explains itself. It is performed by placing the Racket as close as possible to the fall or pitch of the ball. The less the elevation of the ball from the floor, at the time it meets the Racket, the better. The latter should be held firm and almost without motion, so that the ball may be returned by its own force, rather than by the stroke of the Player. This may be considered, though not the most decisive, the neatest and most graceful Stroke at Tennis. A sudden and almost magical effect is produced with the least possible effort.

It is a description of Return in constant use. Many balls cannot be returned, at least not conveniently, in any other manner, and it is equally effectual with the Volley, in stopping the progress of a Cut-ball. I know of no Rule for obtaining perfection in it. The execution is so rapid and instantaneous, that a quick eye and good judgment, rather than any deliberate position of the body or arm, are chiefly requisite.

THE BOAST.

To Boast, or as the French term it “*bricoler*,” is to strike the ball forcibly against either of the Side-walls; this is not a stroke very generally admired, nor one of great utility in equal matches over the Court. It gives, however, a pleasing variety to the Game, and is of

essential use in many situations—where Half-court, for example, is given, its value is incalculable. Here it would be impossible to bring many balls into the prescribed Half-court by any other means, while at the same time the Player avoids placing the ball upon the Racket of his Adversary, disconcerts his Game, by obliging him to alter his position,—and, finally, tries his judgment; for a Boasted-ball, if it reach the opposite Side-wall in its bound, is very difficult to judge accurately. A young Player seldom understands it, and a more experienced one will frequently mistake the apparently irregular action of the ball. The arguments against the Boast are, that it requires great force, is longer in reaching a given point, and consequently gives more time to the Adversary,—add to this, it is not a ball difficult to be re-

turned, if accurately judged. A Player should be able to boast equally well with his back and fore hand.

As a general rule for judging a Boasted-ball (that does not cross the Court so as to come in contact with the opposite Side-wall), it should be remembered, that it will invariably incline, on its rebound from the floor, to the wall against which it was boasted, and nearly in the same angle; in other words, the ball will not follow the Line of Incidence.

ON FORCING.

This Stroke is chiefly used in playing for the Dedans, and answers to the French expression “Tirer.” Strength and precision are required to execute it well, but if the Player possesses these, no Stroke at Tennis is more formidable or

decisive.—It can be equally played with the back or fore hand, though, in my opinion, with greater effect with the former; because in striking with the back hand, the ball is more easily masked or covered, thus keeping the Adversary in ignorance of what is intended, until it be too late for him to defend the Post attacked.

The force for the Dedans by the Side-wall, or by the Boast, as it is generally termed, is a very powerful and masterly Stroke, and cannot be too much practised,—for if the ball be so played as to make an acute angle from the Side-wall into the Dedans, it is scarcely possible to return it. It may be well to observe generally, that, in Forcing, it is better to abate something in the velocity of the Stroke, in order to secure greater precision. A ball hit with all the collected

force of the body, is seldom accurately directed—Vis consilî expers, mole ruit suâ—for if the opening be missed, the force applied is worse than thrown away, it becomes prejudicial. It may be well to conclude this article with observing, that the “Cut” is not necessary in Forcing for the Dedans, however much used, and for this reason probably—a ball plainly hit will reach a given point sooner than one Cut.

ON STOPPING.

To Stop is to parry or guard the Dedans, last Gallery or Guille, but chiefly the first mentioned opening. The term is not thought to be so appropriate as the French, “ parer,” and for this reason—to Stop the ball, that is, merely to prevent its entering the Dedans, &c. is not suffi-

cient; it must be returned also over the Net, otherwise the Stroke will be equally lost. As the Dedans, if hit, is a certain Stroke or point in the game, it requires no argument to show the importance of being able to *stop* well; I mean with accuracy, and with the fore and back hand. If there be close Chases, and the Dedans be well defended, the Adversary is left almost without resource. To have a sure Stop, is a great mark of a good Player; in short, it is a very difficult part of the game, and young rising Players, who may be seen to execute some Strokes with much brilliancy and effect, are frequently, I may say generally, more or less deficient in this.

UN COUP DE TEMS.

I should not have made use of this expression, if any one had occurred to me in our own language capable of conveying to the reader the nature and character of the Stroke intended to be described.

This Stroke is not in frequent use, being resorted to only by great Players in desperate cases. To succeed in it, the Player must prejudge the probable course and time or rate of the ball, and strike, by anticipation, the place to which he supposes it will come. This cannot, of course, be necessary except in the case of balls severely cut, and where the rebound is so short and quick as not to allow the Player time for deliberate judgment and execution. In such cases, these two powers must act simultaneously, and the execution follow

the judgment of the ball so rapidly as to anticipate its course. That this Stroke frequently fails must be admitted, but with good Players it succeeds sufficiently often to warrant the attempt; indeed, who would not attempt, when success is attended with applause, and failure with no disgrace.

Audacia certè
Laus erit, in magnis et voluisse sat est.

ON JUDGMENT.

This most important point demands particular consideration; as without the power of judging the ball, no one, however otherwise gifted, can hope to attain to any degree of skill in this game. It precedes, and in importance exceeds even execution itself, though it cannot be ac-

quired independently of it. A ball to be well played, must be first accurately judged.

Now although this great *requisite* at Tennis can only be thoroughly acquired and matured by practice and observation, it may, nevertheless, be of use to observe, as a general position, that the manner in which a ball is struck must determine the judgment of it; the Twist or Cut is discoverable partly from the position of the Racket, partly from the motion and direction of the arm, and lastly from the sound or note which proceeds from the cords of the Racket when the ball is struck. The manner and effect of a Stroke should consequently be most narrowly watched.

But if to judge even commonly well be highly necessary, that early judgment by which a player is enabled to foresee

the progress and result of a ball, from the moment it quits the Racket of the Adversary, is a power of a still higher description, and is that faculty, which, if possessed in an eminent degree, cannot fail to give him a great superiority in the game. With this quality he may defy the utmost reach of activity, and all the force and decision of overwhelming strength. Of this we have had a proof in the celebrated French Player MASON, who had nothing in point of size or force from which to derive his superiority, but whose early judgment was of so rare a description, as to give him the appearance of one fortuitously placed in the Court, in the exact spot most suited to his purpose, or to borrow a French phrase, “la balle venoit toujours le trouver.”*—it seemed rather to seek him,

* La balle cherche le bon joueur.

than he to pursue *it*. I must conclude this head with these observations, as I know of no plan for acquiring this great excellence beyond continued practice and accurate observation.

ON PLAYING FOR AND DEFENDING CHASES.

On the importance of this branch of the game it is unnecessary to dwell; but I cannot omit making some remarks which have occurred to me, and to most others probably who have studiously considered the game.

It is observable, then, that Players of no great force are found to be able to “strike out” for Chases with a precision and effect, to which the rest of their game bears no proportion, and whenever it happens that their *first Stroke* is returned

by the Adversary, they become wholly disconcerted, and at a loss how to repeat the attack. The recollection of the chase is lost, or apparently lost, in their eagerness to return the ball again ; and if this be done, it is done generally in a hopeless manner in relation to the Chase, or at least without the appearance of any fixed design.

The masterly Player, on the contrary, never loses sight of the Chase, not even in the utmost heat of a long and contested Reste, being fully aware that he may as well fail to return the ball altogether, as return it ineffectually ; but if this coolness and collectedness be necessary in the person who plays for the Chase, it is not less so in the Player who defends it. His judgment should be first exercised in seeing that he does not play the ball unnecessarily ; and if necessarily, then that

he play it to the best advantage, by putting it, if possible, into the Galleries, and thus depriving his Adversary of all means of returning it. The attention of the Player cannot be too much directed to these important objects. It is the game, and the whole game.

OBSERVATIONS UPON PLAYING TO THE HALF COURT.

The Player who gives these odds is required to confine all his balls to that half of the Court on either side, which shall be chosen by his Adversary, who on the other hand is at liberty to play his balls into any part of the whole Court without limitation.

The Half Courts chosen are generally those on the left hand from the Dedans. Players of very unequal force are brought

more conveniently together by this mode than by any other; whilst the interest of the Game is better supported than in matches over the Court between Players of very disproportionate powers. Add to this, the resources of a great player are shown in all their variety, and if the Attack and Defence be well conducted, the party will frequently be one of much spirit and animation.

The superior Player, in making his Attack, must be regulated by the system of Defence adopted by his Opponent. If the Player who defends the Half Court should stand advanced as far, or nearly so, as the Blue or last Gallery-line (Service Side), as I maintain he ought to do, the giver of the odds must, to avoid playing upon his Racket, endeavour to play for the Dedans, over his head, or by the side-wall over the Penthouse, or by

boasting behind him : for if, instead of this, he should play at his Adversary, the balls, if he has a tolerable Volley, will be returned upon him so rapidly, as greatly to disconcert his game. If, however, the defending party stand back, he (the giver of the odds) will have little more to do than to place his balls on the floor, that is, strike out in the usual manner, merely confining himself to the proper Court. This system of Defence, however, cannot, I think, be approved by any one who has ever himself given the odds, and felt the embarrassment on the one hand, of being obliged constantly to vary his balls, or to play to the very face of his Adversary ; and the relief, on the other hand, of having a clear Half Court to play into, with time to prepare for the ball, should it be returned.

ON DOUBLE MATCHES.

It requires four players, properly speaking, to constitute a Double Match, though where three only are engaged, it is still so termed. All the common Rules of Tennis applicable to single matches apply equally to these parties: There are nevertheless some regulations which relate to them exclusively, which ought to find a place in this Treatise.

The four persons are distributed two on each side; those on the same side being partners. They are sometimes confined by agreement to their particular Half Courts. This is most frequently done when there is a great inequality between the Players; for were it otherwise, the strongest Player would usurp so much of the game, as to leave his weaker part-

ner a mere idle spectator. It is therefore settled in these cases, (on making the match,) that the stronger and weaker Player on both sides shall serve and strike out alternately, and that the stronger Player shall not play any balls which fall out of his own Half Court, or so that he cannot reach them while keeping (as he is bound to do) one foot within his own division of the Court.

Where the Players are more on an equality in regard to force, no such restriction is called for, and in that case the Players are at liberty to dispose of themselves in such a manner, as they may consider best for attack or defence and for the general interest of their game. Now when the parties are not confined or tied, as it is termed, the following Rules should be observed.

A Tennis-court is divided lengthwise

by a broad chalk-line, running from the centre of the Dedans to the opposite end—and when we speak of the Half-court, it means the half thus divided from the other, longitudinally; but a Tennis-court is also divided *across* by a *blue-line*, leaving almost as much distance from the Dedans to *this line*, as from *it* to the Net. In playing a double match, this latter division should be most attended to, and the Player who is on the right hand (Service side) should defend the *whole* of the Dedans, as well as his own side, while the other partner, placed in advance, should receive such balls as fall short, or, being played strong, rebound back to him from the wall of the Dedans, not regarding whether they be in the right or left hand half of the Court. In other words, the Players should, in distributing their strength, con-

sider the Court as divided crosswise instead of lengthwise,

These observations apply principally to the Service side, but are not wholly inapplicable to the Hazard side also. I have dwelt much on this point, because, in England, where the Double Match is not well understood, the Partners are too much inclined to defend, each their own Half Court, taking it lengthwise. By this arrangement they do not dispose their strength to the best advantage, while their interference with each other becomes frequent and almost inevitable,

I will conclude this head with observing that the Service is generally given by the weaker Player, who stands in advance, in the left hand Court, it being disadvantageous to remove the stronger Player from his position for this purpose.

A MATCH OF THREE.

In this case one Player is opposed to two, and the fullest opportunity is afforded to the single Player of displaying all the powers and resources of which the Game is capable. If the Players be of the first class, it is more interesting than a single match, inasmuch as the ball is kept alive for a greater length of time; it also admits of more variety in the Strokes, and calls for greater judgment, strength, and dexterity on the part of the single Player, in defeating the combined efforts of the adverse Partners. I speak chiefly of the part to be performed by the single Player, as the Game of the *two* scarcely differs from that recommended in a Match of Four. The single Player should, as a general rule, be content to

make advantageous Chases, if on the Service side, by playing the balls short for the Galleries on the Hazard side; and if he be on the Hazard side, he will do well to play, not unfrequently, for the Dedans over the head of his Adversary, who stands advanced, or on the floor between the two, or for the Dedans by the Boast, which is, after all, the most masterly and decisive Stroke. As it may be asked, whether two Players may be considered to strengthen each other, that is, whether a Player be stronger with or without a partner, I am prepared to answer in the affirmative—“*Vis unita fortior,*” and in the proportion of about four to three—supposing all the Players necessary for this match be of equal, or nearly equal, force. Thus, if three of the best Markers, or three of the best Amateur Players, be matched together—

two of them, as must be the case, against the other one, the *two* Players will be able to give the *single* Player fifteen, or thereabouts; and even should one of the Players be very inferior to the other two, over the Court, he will nevertheless strengthen the Player with whom he is joined, if he be a tolerably good second in a double match, and that he allow, as he ought to do, his superior partner to *strike out* always, and take the lead in the party.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLAYER, WHEN
THE SIDE WALLS ARE BARRED.*

To play this Game well, the ball cannot be too much cut, “hachee,” as the

* The nature of these odds, as well as of any that may have been mentioned heretofore, will be found in the Appendix.

French term it; for as your Stroke, from the nature of the match, must be confined, in a great degree, to the middle of the Court, you have little means of perplexing the judgment of your Adversary, and must endeavour to do that by the weight and severity of your balls, which may in other matches be effected by placing them well, and varying their direction. I would not, however, have it inferred from this, that nothing is to be risked in these odds,—on the contrary, it will be frequently advantageous to hazard striking the Side-walls, in order to put your Adversary out of his place, and to call his judgment in question. The Twist Stroke should generally be avoided as dangerous. The straighter and harder the ball is hit, so that it be kept upon the floor, the better; and it will be well, when an opportunity offers, to play

home, that is, to the bottom or nick of the wall.

ON GIVING TOUCH-NO-WALL.

This is an elegant and ingenious Game, and shows to what refinement Tennis can be brought, and to what an extent a Player may, in time, become master of the ball: for as the balls of the Player, who gives these odds, are in no case to touch any of the surrounding walls, either before they have reached the floor, or before the completion of the first bound, it will easily be conceived how difficult it must be to confine them within such narrow limits; yet this is done by first-rate Players, with a precision that is truly astonishing.

A beginner cannot receive a better description of odds, as he will be taught

to stoop and to return balls from the floor, generally the most difficult. His judgment will also be exercised in determining whether certain balls will reach any of the walls, in which case it would be worse than useless to attempt to return them.

The character of this Game is one of *return*; for as the superior Player cannot decide the ball by reason of the restriction he is under, and the inferior one from deficiency in execution, it is frequently kept in play for a considerable time. This adds greatly to its beauty; for Tennis is never so little interesting as when the Rests are short, and the Players more occupied in changing sides than in returning the balls.

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR
TAKING BISQUES.

To take a *Bisque* judiciously requires the most intimate acquaintance with the Game of Tennis. The freedom of choice allowed, as to time and circumstances, however advantageous, is not a little embarrassing, especially to young Players; nor is this a matter of wonder, when it is considered that the Score of the Game, the state of the Chases, if any, and the relative strength of the contending parties, require all to be well weighed at the time. I shall therefore endeavour to lay down some general rules for taking Bisques and to elucidate them by proper examples.

It may be held as a rule, that when odds are given, a Bisque should not be

taken to *make*, but to *save* a Game; and vice versa, when odds are received,—but this rule, like every other, has its exceptions. It may be justifiable even in the better Player to take a Bisque to make a forward and strong Set, or to secure the fifth Game. A Bisque may also be properly taken to remove a close Chase, in cases where, had there been no Chase, it would have been very ill judged to employ it.

But that which young Players arrive at with most difficulty, is a certain management by which fit occasions may sometimes be produced for taking a Bisque, as also a readiness in seizing upon those which offer in the ordinary course of the game. It is unquestionable that a Bisque may be so taken as nearly to double its value. Suppose yourself, for example, on the Hazard Side, and the

game thirty all, with a close Chase in your favour: what an advantage is it in this situation to take your Bisque, leaving your Adversary, on changing sides, to play for the close Chase. If again, being on the Service Side, you shall have made a Hazard-Side-Chase, when at thirty all, you may, by taking your Bisque and changing sides for the Chase, nearly secure two Strokes in succession. In this lies the whole art. A Bisque should do something more than add a simple point to your game.

As an example to show how an opportunity may be intentionally produced for taking a Bisque, suppose A and B the two Players, A having a Bisque and the game thirty all. Let A be on the Service Side, with a wide Chase, A properly serves again, but with a resolution not to play at the ball if well, that is, if severely.

returned by B, and for this plain reason; if it make a close Chase, A can always command it with his Bisque, and in this manner: upon changing sides, A plays for the first, being a wide Chase, and whether he win or lose it, though the winning it is much in his favour, takes his Bisque for the second—thus making himself game or leaving himself at Deuce.

Any one, the least acquainted with Tennis, can understand the obvious propriety of taking a Bisque to win a game at advantage, especially if it removes a close Chase at the same time. But it does not occur to young Players to take a Bisque, so as to throw their Adversary into the dilemma of losing the game in default of winning a close Chace.

It may be well sometimes to make a strong game with a Bisque, in preference to waiting for an opportunity of winning

the game with it. Thus—let A and B be the Players, and the Score *fifteen* all, with two Chases, say the one at *four* and the other at *three*, and suppose A to win the first Chase ; A then takes his Bisque for the second, making his game *forty* to *fifteen*, at least *five* to *one* in his favour ; whereas had A played for the second Chase at *three* and lost it (no unfair supposition) the game, supposing him then to take the Bisque, would be *forty* to *thirty*, or only *three* to *one* in his favour.*

If a Player should receive many Bisques, it will not be advisable for him to husband them too much. Let him rather avail himself of the opportunities for

* It is assumed to be of great importance to the Player A to win the game, and the illustration is brought forward in that view. If, however, A should have a forward Set, or a very backward one, it may be well for him to retain his Bisque, and risk both Chases.

taking them as they occur, and thus avoid the predicament into which the inexperienced so frequently fall, of being obliged to take their Bisques (possibly all in one game) with no hope of ultimate success, but merely to save the set for the moment.

There is a French adage implying “that the Bisque which wins a game is never thrown away,” yet however much we may admire these compendious and pithy maxims, they are not to be held up as invariable rules of conduct; and one would not hesitate in the face of such a maxim, to pronounce it extremely ill-judged in a Player who gives high odds to take his Bisque at advantage, except to win the Set. His object should be of course to reduce his Adversary from advantage, and that too, if the opportunity

can be found, when he has a *close*, or his Adversary a *wide Chase* to play for.

After all that has been said, there are many nice cases, which can only be determined by the state of the Set; and some indeed are so questionable, that hardly two Players will be found of the same opinion respecting them.

ON THE RACKET.

The Racket proper for Tennis should not weigh less than one pound, nor exceed eighteen or twenty ounces. The length is generally from two feet one to two feet two inches. The head or bow which receives the catgut or cord, and is therefore the most material part of the Racket, should not be too narrow, nor so wide as to prevent the gut being drawn and held to a proper degree of

tension. A Racket should not be heavy or light in the extreme; for if too light, it will not sufficiently resist the ball of itself, that is, by its own weight, and will consequently require an impulse from the Player, which might otherwise be spared. If on the other hand, it be too heavy, the Player will find it difficult to manage with ease and fatiguing to his wrist. When a Player shall have ascertained from practice and observation the description of Racket that suits him best, he cannot be too nice in choosing them all of equal weight and similar shape. In the opinion of many much depends on the Racket and its condition.

The French Racket is far superior to any other, the preparation or seasoning of the wood being well understood in that country; those that have hitherto been made in England are but little admired.

GENERAL REMARKS.

There is no notion more generally entertained than that Tennis requires an uncommon degree of activity; nevertheless, I humbly conceive this opinion to be carried much too far; and that activity would more fitly be described as desirable than as essentially necessary. For important and convenient as it may be, it by no means stands first upon the list of requisite qualifications. That an active man will, "*cæteris paribus*," have a great advantage over a slow and unwieldy one, cannot be denied; yet no one, I maintain, ever became a first rate Player purely from superior activity; and it would be as vain to expect such a result from such a qualification, as to suppose, that in field sports, the best walker must

become the best shot. Nay, it may be well questioned, whether great activity be not in many instances prejudicial, by leading the possessor to do that with his *heels* which can be best done with his *head*.

Something of the same sort may be said with respect to strength. A certain proportion of muscular power is necessary to command the Racket with ease, to give effect to the ball, and to bear the bodily exertion that is required in such a game ; but great size or uncommon corporeal strength are not requisite, perhaps not desirable. Of such as possess them it may often be observed with truth,

" In sua vesanas habuit dispendia vires."

The next point of importance which has not been touched upon in the body of this Treatise, is the necessity of habituating yourself to ascertain the position

of your adversary immediately before you play a ball ; for as it will be his duty and object to watch your intention with the utmost narrowness, so it will be no less incumbent on you to mislead him, by playing, on every favourable opportunity, for that part of the Court which is most exposed, or to which you perceive his mind to be least directed. I say on every favourable occasion, for it is not every ball that will admit of time to pre-determine where it should be placed ; but supposing the ball to be of that description, the eye may be allowed a momentary transition to the Adversary, in order by a rapid glance to ascertain his position before the ball is played, and then “ prendre le défaut de l’Adversaire,” as the French term it.

However simple and easy this may appear, it is found in practice to be one of

the most difficult acquirements of the game. The mind is commonly so entirely engrossed with the ball, so bent on judging and playing it, that the difficulty of withdrawing the attention and directing it to another object is extremely great. Nor will this excite wonder, when the accuracy with which every ball must be judged is fully considered. The least error in this respect brings you too near or leaves you too far off, in neither of which situations can the ball be played with effect. This being the state of the case (and no player can well dispute it), there is always some risk in losing sight of the ball even for an instant. The risk must nevertheless be incurred, till by practice this division of the attention between the ball and the Adversary, between the thing to be played, and the place where, become familiar and easy. And here I may ob-

serve; that from this habit of self-possession results that highly esteemed quality in a Player known by the term “address,” which may be described as the faculty of discovering with readiness how the ball can be disposed of, or the match conducted to the best advantage, and of thus combining with execution as much of design and mind as the game is capable of admitting.

There is another point of some interest, and upon which opinions are much divided, namely, whether the Racket should or should not be held short. The question, as it appears to me, lies between greater security on the one side and greater force on the other. A Player may, I conceive attain to more accuracy with a short Racket, that is, when the Racket is grasped nearly in the centre of the handle; but by every principle of

mechanics, greater force can be communicated to the ball, when the Racket is held nearer to the extremity : it is as the power of a long to a short lever. But the question still recurs, which is the best method, and to this I feel it difficult to give a direct answer.

The modern fashion is undoubtedly to hold it short ; the old mode long. A high degree of perfection in the game may be attained either way, and the one or the other will probably be adopted as the Player may chance to prefer a Cox or a Charier.

The last point which occurs to me as necessary to be mentioned, (it having been omitted in treating upon the Service,) is the Position which the Player should take immediately after the Service, and during the Reste. The general opinion

is, I believe, that he should place himself at an easy distance from the centre of the Dedans, say about the line of Chase 2 and 3; for if he retire further back, he will not be able to advance with ease to the Volley, if necessary, nor for such balls as may fall short, or come out upon the rebound from the end-wall; and if more distant from the Dedans, he will find it difficult to retreat in time for the defence of that important opening, or to prevent close Chases, if the ball be well struck out.*

There are, however, many circumstances to justify a more or less advanced position. It will be often advantageous to stand forward against a weak Player, in order to be in readiness to decide those

* These observations are, *mutatis mutandis*, equally applicable to the Player on the Hazard-side.

balls which are but feebly and ineffectually returned, of which there will be many, if you succeed in distressing him with your Service. The reverse, however, of this course must be pursued against a superior Player, who being able to command the ball, and to *strike out* with precision and effect, or to *force* for the Dedans, will not fail to get the balls past you on one side or the other, should you venture to take too forward a position. With such a Player, you can scarcely hold yourself too near to the Dedans, as well for the purpose of repelling his attacks upon that *opening*, as for the better returning such balls as may be laid down for Chases.

The forward game, though attended with some risk, is undoubtedly formidable; for being one of attack, it has the

effect of embarrassing, and sometimes of intimidating the Adversary, particularly if the Player who adopts it has a good *side-wall Service* and a sure *back-hand Volley*. No Player of celebrity adopted this plan of attack more frequently than BARCELLON. He almost invariably gave a *side-wall Service*; and if the Service was critical, the Adversary could do little more than toss it, or play it towards the low wall under the Galleries, called by the French “la grande batterie,” in which case, by standing forward, he was always prepared to *Volley* it, and seldom failed to do so with the best effect. Again, if the Service was somewhat more open, and admitted of being played to the *fore-hand Court*, he was quick to catch your intention, and generally prepared to return it by a *Volley-boast* against the great or

main wall.* It was, in fact, no easy matter to get the ball past him. Yet he seldom ventured to take this advanced position, (or only did so occasionally) against players of equal, or nearly equal, force with himself. I conclude therefore, that it is not, upon the whole, a safe Game, or one for general adoption. It is, in a word, a system of attack of great force and value, when suitably introduced by the skilful, but of a sort to betray the less experienced Player into unexpected difficulties.

* This is called by the French “Le grand mur,”—and here I must observe that the English have no descriptive terms for many parts of the Court. It is this circumstance alone, and no affectation of putting forth my knowledge of the French language, that has driven me, occasionally, to adopt the French terms. Many English players have never probably heard of the “Battery;” I can safely say that I never recollect to have heard that denomination given to the wall under the Galleries, by any of our English Markers, nor any other particular or appropriate name assigned to it.

Before I close this Treatise, it may not be useless to make a few observations upon certain important "*moral*" qualifications, without which a Player may, and frequently does, lose those advantages, which his other attainments in this Game would undoubtedly afford him. The qualities of the mind upon which I would more particularly insist, are those of patience, perseverance, and good temper. A Player will find these his best allies, whenever his own powers of execution shall, from whatever cause, for a time, desert him; or those of his Adversary exceed their usual measure. On these occasions let him summon all his equanimity, let him be calm, patient, and persevering, and either the superiority of his Antagonist will abate, or his own play rise to its usual standard. If, on the contrary, the Player once allow

his mistakes and disappointments to irritate and disturb his mind ; if, what is still worse, he allow the heat of passion to take possession of him, it can hardly be calculated to what extent his Game will suffer ; for so directly and immediately does the mind operate upon the body, that the head never loses any portion of its judgment, without detracting in an equal degree from the accuracy of the hand. Nothing therefore is more to be avoided in this Game, than immoderate bursts of passion.—So that it may truly be said,

“ Iram qui vincit, maximum superat hostem.”

I have now brought this short Treatise to a conclusion. It was begun many years back, and has been continued at

intervals, as leisure induced or inclination incited, and without any intention of making it public.

If it be plain and perspicuous, and be calculated to give the reader a correct view of the Game, and of the methods to be pursued in attaining to perfection in it, my purpose will have been answered; while at the same time, the partiality of those friends under whose advice I have ventured to send it to the Press, will be sufficiently vindicated.

It may be the opinion of some, that I should have opened with those preliminary and initial parts of the Game which are given in the Appendix; but I was unwilling to drag the reader through a long and uninteresting detail, merely for the sake of preserving a more methodical arrangement. I considered too, that the bare perusal of the dimensions

of a Tennis Court, the use of the Chases and the mode of reckoning the Game, (all which are to be found, I believe, in every edition of Hoyle,) could never tend to form a Player, nor enable him, without actual practice, to understand the nicer parts of the Game. The work indeed might have been thought incomplete without such particulars, but the value of it, as a dissertation upon Tennis, would have remained the same.

But be the arrangement which I have adopted, ill advised or not, I trust that the imperfections and inaccuracies of this short Treatise will meet with indulgence; and the more so, as I have not been able to discover any work upon the subject from which I could derive assistance, either in regard to the matter to be introduced, or as to the best manner of putting it together. To conclude, it has

served to amuse my vacant hours; and though in preparing it for the Press a few alterations and additions have been made, (and this will account, in a degree, for the insertion of some material observations in the concluding pages, which might more properly have found a place under some of the preceding heads,) it is presented to the Public nearly in its original shape.

APPENDIX.

DESCRIPTION OF A TENNIS COURT

It was at first intended to omit the elementary parts of the Game, as not falling directly within the view of this Treatise, but many, possibly, would think the work defective without them, and the introduction of them will, at all events, have the advantage of enabling those who would become Players at Tennis, provided they could easily understand the rudiments of the Game, to form some judgment of the Players, so far at least as to know who wins and who loses; for as the Game is a very intricate one, and as those, who are perfectly ignorant of it, may look on for a great length of time, without being able to discover to what object the efforts of the Players are directed, or when the Game is decided; it may be well to give such a general description of it, as may render any chance-

spectator not altogether a stranger to it, when he finds himself in a Tennis Court.

The size of a Tennis Court of the best dimensions, is generally about 96 or 97 feet long, by 33 or 34 wide. Though many Courts are smaller, this is the general proportion, a foot more or less in length or width is not thought of any great consequence.

A Line or Net hangs exactly across the middle, and is precisely one yard in height at the centre, but rises at each end a foot or more, so that it hangs in a slope or sweep. It is of a substance to resist the force of any ball, with whatever force it may be struck. Over this net the balls must be struck with a Racket or Bat, to make the Stroke good. Upon entering a Tennis Court, there is a long gallery which goes to the Dedans; this Dedans is a kind of front gallery, where spectators usually stand, and into which, whenever a ball is struck, it tells for a certain Stroke.

The long Side Gallery is divided into different compartments or galleries, each of which has its particular name, as follows.— From the Line towards the Dedans are the “First Gallery, Door, Second Gallery, and

the Last Gallery." This is called the Service Side. From the Dedans to the Last Gallery are the Figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, at a yard distance each; by these the Chases, which form a most essential part of the Game, are marked.

On the other side of the Line or Net are also the "First Gallery, Door, Second Gallery, and Last Gallery." This is called the Hazard Side. Every ball struck into the *last Gallery* on *this Side* reckons for a certain Stroke, the same as the Dedans. Between the second and this last Gallery are the figures 1, 2, to mark the Chases on the Hazard Side. Over this long Gallery, or these compartments, is a covering called the Penthouse, on which the ball is played from the Service Side, in order to begin a Set at Tennis. This ball is called a Service; and is thus described. The ball* is struck with a Racket from the

* The Tennis Ball weighs about two ounces and a quarter; is made of strips of cloth closely wound together, and is covered with a coarse white kerseymere.

The Racket, as before observed, is about 2 feet 2 inches in length. The Bow is made of ash, the continuation of which forms two sides of the handle. The middle piece is

hand, by the Player on the Dedans Side, and, to constitute a Service, must fall upon or strike the Side-Penthouse on the *other* side of the Cross-Net or Line, and pitch or drop within certain Lines on the Hazard Side. If the ball fail to do this, it is called "a Fault," two of them consecutively are reckoned a Stroke lost. If the ball roll round the end Penthouse on the opposite side of the Court, so as to fall beyond a certain line described for that purpose, it is called a "Passe"; †reckons for nothing on either side, and the Player must serve again.

On the right hand wall of the Court from the Dedans, but on the Hazard Side, is the Tambour, a part of the wall which projects so as to alter the direction of the ball, and to make a variety in the Stroke.

The last thing on the right hand side is called the Grille, wherein if the ball be struck, it is reckoned 15, or a certain Stroke.

of lime tree. The head or bow is bent into an oval shape, and is pierc'd with holes to receive the catgut, which is drawn as tight as possible, in order to impel the ball with the greater force. The weight of a Racket is from 18 to 22 ounces.

† In Serving, a Passe removes a previous fault.

It now remains to describe the use of the Chases, and how these Chases decide or interfere so much in the Game. When the Player gives his Service at the beginning of a Set, his Adversary is supposed to return the ball, and wherever it falls after the first rebound *untouched*, the Chase is called accordingly;—for example,—If the ball fall at figure 1, the Chase is called at a yard, that is to say, at a yard from the Dedans: this Chase remains till a second Service is given, and if the Player on the Service Side lets the ball go after his Adversary returns it, it will form another Chase, when the parties must change sides, there being two Chases; and he who then will be on the Hazard Side, must play to win the first Chase, which if he win by striking the ball so as to fall, after its first rebound, nearer to the Dedans than figure 1, without his Adversary being able to return it from its first hop, or before it touches the floor, he gains a Stroke, and then proceeds in like manner to play for the second Chase, wherever it may happen to be. If a ball fall on a Line with the first Gallery, the Chase is likewise marked at such place, naming the Gallery, Door, &c. When it is

just put over the Line, it is called “ a Chase at the Line.”*

The Chases on the Hazard Side proceed from the ball being returned either too hard, or not quite hard enough; so as to cause the ball, to fall after its first rebound, on this side of the Blue Line, or Line which bounds the Hazard Side Chases, in which case it is a Chase at 1, 2, First Gallery, Door, or Second Gallery, provided always that there be no Chase then in play. On changing sides, the Player, in order to win this Chase, (it being one on the *Hazard Side*,) may put the ball over the Line *any where*, so that his Adversary does not return it. Whether there be any Chase depending or not, all balls put over the Net from the Service Side, which fall, without being returned, beyond the Blue Line on the Hazard Side, reckon for a Stroke.

* If the score of the Game of either party be 40 or Advantage, it will be necessary to change sides, as soon as *one* Chase is made,—because, as the Game may be won or lost by the decision of this one Chase, there would be no opportunity to play for a second; as Chases are never carried on to a following Game.

A SET.

A Set at Tennis consists of six Games, and a Game of Four Points; but an “Advantage”* Set, which is most commonly played, though equally consisting of only six Games, may be contingently lengthened out to any number of Games, as a Game may be to any number of Strokes.

It is thus explained. If a Player win the sixth Game before his Adversary wins the fifth, the Set is terminated;—but if the Games be equal on both sides, when they amount to four or five, that is, if the parties be four Games all, or five Games all, in that case two Games must be won successively by one side or the other to decide the Set; so that a Set may continue for any number of Games provided they be won and lost alternately.

* In France, Advantage Sets not uncommonly consist of eight Games.

A GAME.

A Game, as above stated, consists of four Strokes, which, instead of being numbered one, two, three, four, are reckoned in a manner, which makes it at first very difficult to understand.

The first Stroke or point is called 15
The second 30
The third 40 or 45
The fourth and last Game.

Unless indeed the Players get three Strokes each, when, instead of calling it 40 all, it is called "Deuce," after which, as soon as any Stroke is got, it is called "Advantage;" and, in case the Strokes become equal again, "Deuce" again; till one or the other gets two Strokes following, which win the Game.

There are various ways of giving Odds at Tennis, in order to make a match equal; or, in other words, to put the inferior Player upon a level with the superior; and that they may be clearly understood, I have given the following list of them, with a description or illustration of each, so that any person may form a judgment of the advantage received or given.

CHOICE OF SIDES.

As it is a question whether the Service or Hazard Side be most advantageous, there can be no description of Odds less than this. It is usual, however, at the opening of a match, to toss up for it,—the gainer of the toss, of course, chooses that side which he considers most advantageous to him;—it is something like the stringing at Billiards for the lead, though of less importance.

THE HALF, OR DEMI-BISQUE.

The Half-Bisque is a description of Odds that has not yet been brought into use in this country; but it is well known and understood in France. It is the lowest advantage that can be given, choice of sides excepted, and is thus defined.

If a Player has given one fault, and is apprehensive of giving another, he may remove the first fault by taking the Half-Bisque. The Half-Bisque has also the power of removing a Chase, without adding to the Score of the person who takes it. Another, though

disputed, advantage is said to belong to it,—namely, that of creating a second Fault, where one has already been made in Serving. Thus, if I make one Fault, and my Adversary take his Half-Bisque, I lose a Stroke or Point. That this is giving too great a power to the Half-Bisque, will, I think, be generally admitted; and if it should be thought well to adopt this description of Odds in this country, it should not, I submit, be considered as carrying with it the last mentioned advantage.

A BISQUE.

The Bisque is one Stroke or Point to be taken or scored, whenever the Player who receives this advantage, thinks proper. For example, suppose a Game of the set to be forty to thirty. He who is forty, by taking his Bisque secures the Game. But if the Bisque be taken by the Player, who is only thirty, it has the effect of reducing his Adversary to *his* score, or in other words of removing a Point from his Adversary's Game, not of adding one to his own.

Any number of Bisques may be given, though it is not common to see more given

than three or four, and it is at the option of the Player who receives them to take them separately or together. A Bisque when taken, disposes of a Chase, if there be one in play.

HALF FIFTEEN.

The next greater Odds are “Half Fifteen,” a term difficult to be understood by persons, who are not acquainted with the Game, though descriptive enough of what is meant to be expressed. In these Odds, nothing is given in the first Game, but one whole Stroke or Point (viz. 15) in the next, and so on alternately for as many Games as the Set may last.

FIFTEEN.

The next greater Odds are Fifteen, that is, a certain Stroke or Point at the beginning of each Game.

HALF THIRTY.

Half Thirty is fifteen one Game, and thirty the next, and so on alternately.

THIRTY.

Thirty is two certain Strokes at the beginning of each Game.

HALF FORTY.

These Odds are Thirty, or two Strokes in the first, and Forty or three Strokes in the next Game, and so on in alternate Games.

FORTY.

Forty is three Strokes given in each game.

ROUND SERVICE.

To constitute a Round Service, the ball must strike both the Side and End Penthouse. The ball is thus rendered easy to be returned or *struck out* by the Player on the Hazard Side.

HALF COURT.

Half Court is when a Player is obliged to

confine his balls to one Half of the Court lengthways; the choice being (at starting) with his Adversary, which Half it shall be; while the Adversary is allowed to play his balls where ever he pleases. The Straight Half Courts on the left hand of the Player on the Service Side are generally chosen, though some prefer the Cross Courts. If the ball be put out of the defined Half Court (the Service always excepted), it is the loss of a Stroke. Half Court is reckoned equal to Half Thirty, or about one third of the Game.

TOUCH-NO-WALL.

When a Player gives "Touch-no-Wall," he is restricted from playing his balls against any of the surrounding walls (the Service excepted), either before they have touched the floor or before the completion or fall of the first rebound. The openings are considered as barred by these Odds. This advantage is the greatest in use at Tennis, as it admits of any number of Strokes or Points in the Game being given in addition to it.

TOUCH-NO-SIDE WALL.

The Player who gives these Odds is restricted from playing his balls against either of the *Side Walls*. If the ball touch either of them, a stroke or point is lost. The Side Galleries and Doors are barred by these Odds, but not the Dedans, unless so expressly stipulated.

BARRING THE HAZARD.

The Player who gives these Odds agrees to play none of his balls into the Dedans, last Gallery (Hazard Side) or Grille, under forfeiture of the Stroke if the ball be put into any one of them.

BARRING THE OPENINGS.

These are Odds of the same kind as those described under the foregoing head, but including *all* the Galleries and Doors.

THE NICK

Is when the ball strikes the bottom or foot of the Wall, so as to produce no sensible bound or elevation; a complete Nick-ball cannot by any possibility be returned, but many that are nearly so, may be caught up by great quickness resulting from early judgment. The nick is more frequently accidental than intentional, and may therefore be said to subject this game, though in a very slight degree, to chance or accident. Many Players, however, adopt a Service, the very essence of which is to nick the Wall, and few Services, however the character of them may be disapproved, are more embarrassing.

The Nick or Foot of the Wall is also played for occasionally in the course of a Reste. It is a masterly and decisive Stroke, and seldom attempted but by proficients.

THE RESTE.

This is unquestionably a French term. They use the phrase "donner le Reste à quelqu'un," when, after great contestation

and efforts for victory on both sides, one person gives another (his opponent) a quietus, a set down, or blow that decides the point at issue. Its definition, as applied to Tennis, is that space of time during which the ball is kept alive; or, in other words, returned without intermission from one Player to the other.*

A PASSE.

This term and the following one have already fallen under observation in giving the description of a Tennis Court. It will not, however, be amiss to give to each a separate head and a more distinct explanation.

A Passe is when the ball from the Service strikes the Side and End Penthouse, rolling round so as to fall beyond a given Line called the Passe-Line. A Passe removes a preceding Fault; and if it could be given with

* Reste, se dit au Jeu de Paume, quand quelqu'un joue si bien qu'il renvoie tous les coups, et que c'est enfin l'Adversaire qui fait la faute—"Cet homme joue mieux que vous, il vous donnera votre *reste*." "Ils ont joué un beau *reste*," pour dire ils se sont renvoyés plusieurs fois l'éteuf.

certainty, might be resorted to occasionally for that purpose, as when one Fault has been made, so much caution is necessary in giving the next Service, that a very indifferent one is frequently the result.

A FAULT,

Specifically so used, is when, in attempting to give a Service, the ball either misses the Penthouse altogether, or falls short of the Blue Line, which crosses the Court at the last Gallery on the Hazard Side. Two Faults in succession reckon as a Stroke or Point lost; and in this manner many points are lost in the game by young Players. An old Player seldom commits such an error, an error to which some small degree of disgrace is considered to attach.

RULES OF THE GAME,

AS COMMONLY OBSERVED IN THE COURTS
IN LONDON.

NEITHER Player can take a Bisque after the ball has been served, nor after a Fault, provided always that no undue advantage be taken by the Player who serves, by giving the Service before his Adversary is prepared, nor by the Adversary in refusing it, under the pretence of being unprepared. If this point be disputed, it must be referred, like other disputed points, to the decision of the Dedans. But if in Serving, a "Passe" be given, a Bisque may then be taken, whether a previous Fault existed or no; for the Passe-ball removes the Fault, and leaves the Game where it was before the Service was attempted.

If a ball be struck *accidentally or inadvertently* before it touch the floor the second time, and be not returned over the Net, it is a Stroke lost, however evident it might be that the ball would have lost the Chase (if one was in play), provided it had not been so touched.

A ball cannot be played after it has previously touched either Player, but the Stroke is lost to the Player whom the ball touches. If the Marker be in doubt whether the ball has touched a Player, he is at liberty to ask the question of the Player whom he supposes it to have touched.

If the ball when struck touch the Cieling, or the Posts, Curtains, or Nets, or other part of the Court above the surrounding walls, or the top of the Side Wall (but not the edge), it is a Stroke lost.

The side Nets at the extreme ends of the Court are an exception to the foregoing Rule, but not the *end* of the Wood or Posts supporting those Nets.

No ball can be played after it has once entered the Dedans, Grille, or any of the Galleries or Doors, or touched any of the Posts

of the said Galleries or Doors,* or the Post in the centre of the Dedans.

If any ball touch the Post of a Gallery, or Door, or the Post of the Dedans, it is to be marked as if it entered such Gallery, Door, or Dedans.

A ball that strikes the Post which supports the Net or Line in the centre of the Court, becomes a Chase at the line, if it pass to the other side of the Net; but is a Stroke lost, if it fall on this side, that is on the side from which it is struck.

Services which strike the Penthouse on the Service side of the Net *only*, are not allowable.

A Service, though it may evidently have crossed the Pass-line, may still be played before it fall on the floor; and if touched and not returned, it is a Stroke lost.

In Double Matches, though the Players be not tied nor restricted, they are nevertheless precluded from making any change *in regard to Serving or Striking out in the middle or course*

* This Rule does not hold good in France. *There* the ball is considered in play although it shall have touched the *Posts* of any of the Galleries or Doors, but not if it shall strike the Post of the Dedans.

of a Game; between the Games they may alter their arrangements as they please, and as often.

In Double Matches, when there is no restriction, the Service may be returned by either Player; but if it be previously agreed that the Players are to strike out alternately, the Service must be returned by the Player who is *then* striking out, otherwise the Stroke is lost.

It is frequently disputed, whether such balls as touch only the edge of the Penthouse be fair Services—the Rule is this :

If the ball on touching the edge of the Penthouse receive any additional and discernible elevation, it is a good Service; if otherwise, a Fault.

If a Service be doubtful, or if any ball be returned so as to render it doubtful whether it was returned fairly or not, it is the duty of the Marker to notice it instantly, and to call it “Fault,” “Good,” or “Foul,” as he may judge it to be. If afterwards disputed, there is always an appeal to the Dedans.

To reverse the decision of the Marker, the concurrent opinion of two Spectators, is necessary, or a majority of two.

If a spectator has betted upon the Stroke, Game, Set, or Party, his opinion upon a disputed ball cannot be taken, unless with the consent of the Players.

In Matches played to the Half Court, if the ball from the Racket of the Player who gives the odds strike the Post in the centre of the Dedans, it is a Stroke to be scored in favour of the Striker.

Again, if, in a similar Match, the ball of the Player who gives the Odds should fall upon any part of the Chalk Line which divides the Court, it is to be considered as within the allowed Half-Court, and to be played or scored accordingly.

So if a Service fall on the Blue Line, (Hazard Side) it is held to be a good Service; and if in the course of play, the ball so fall, and is not returned, it is good, and to be scored accordingly.

Again, if the ball fall on the "Passe" Line, in giving a Service, it must be returned, or the Stroke is lost.

But if a ball played for a Chase, fall on the Line or Spot at which the Chase was marked, such ball is not held to win the Chase; but

the Chase is marked “off;”* and nothing is added to the Score of either party.

If in a Match to the Half Court, a ball struck by the Giver of the Odds, pitch or fall within the prescribed Half Court, but bound into the Dedans on that side or division of it which is barred, it shall, nevertheless, be scored in favour of the Striker.

In Half Court Matches, no ball is held to be out of the given Half Court, until it shall have touched the floor.

If a ball be struck with such force against the Endwall, as to return back into the Court from which it was struck, without previously touching the floor on the other side of the Net, the stroke is lost; but if it touch the floor, and, on its first bound, come back over the Net, it shall be marked as a Chase.

No Marker or Spectator in the Dedans or Galleries, is allowed to give advice to the Players; nor to put a Player in mind of his Bisque or Bisques, in any way, either directly or indirectly.

* In France it is called, “Chase remise,” and is played for over again.

If a Marker make any palpable error in the Score of the Game or set, (such, for instance, as scoring a Stroke or Game for one side instead of the other,) it is allowable for a bystander (as promoting the fairness of the Game) to point it out, provided it be done at the moment; but if another Stroke has been played, nothing can be said except by the Players, or upon an appeal from either of them.

No Spectator or Sitter in the Dedans (though not betting) is allowed to correct the marking of the *Chases*, unless appealed to by the Players, as such a permission would lead to endless altercations.

A Player, if dissatisfied with the marking, may call in a second Marker, and may appeal to the Dedans, whenever he has good reason to think that a Chase or Stroke is marked against him.

THE ODDS,

AS USUALLY BETTED.

As to the Odds at Tennis, they are by no means fixed, but are generally laid as follows.

Upon the first Stroke being won between even Players, that is, 15 love, the Odds upon a single Game

are . . 7 to 4, but 6 to 4 is more usually betted.
Thirty love 4 to 1, but 3 to 1 more usually betted.

Forty love 8 to 1

Thirty fifteen 2 to 1

Forty fifteen 5 to 1

Forty thirty 3 to 1, or 5 to 2.

ODDS OF AN ADVANTAGE SET,

When the first Game is won, are 5 to 4

When two Games love . . 7 to 4, or 2 to 1.

Three Games love . . . 3 to 1

Four Games love . . . 5 to 1

Five Games love . . . 15 to 1

When two Games to one . .	4 to 3
Three Games to one . .	2 to 1
Four Games to one . .	7 to 2
Five Games to one . .	10 to 1
When three Games to two	3 to 2
Four Games to two . .	3 to 1
Five Games to two . .	6 to 1
When four Games to three .	8 to 5
Five Games to three . .	5 to 1
When five Games to four,	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 3 \text{ to } 1 \\ \text{or} \\ 5 \text{ to } 2 \end{array} \right.$
or Advantage Game	

The foregoing Odds are pretty much as they are usually betted, but the Chases interfering, render the Odds very precarious;—to say nothing of the difficulty of making a match so near as to leave neither party the favourite.

N O T E.

IN communicating to the Reader the result of an enquiry which has been made into the antiquity of the Game of Tennis, it has been thought desirable to lay before him, in the first instance, the following extract from Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes of the People of England."

"The Game of Hand-Ball," observes Mr. Strutt, "is called by the French Palm-play, because, says a modern author, originally, 'this exercise consisted in receiving the ball, and driving it back again with the palm of the hand. In former times they played with a naked hand, then with a glove, which in some instances was lined; afterwards they bound cords and tendons round their hands to make the ball rebound more forcibly, and hence the racket derived its origin.' During the reign of Charles the Fifth, Palm-play, which may properly enough be denominated Hand-Tennis, was exceedingly fashionable in France, being played by the nobility for large sums of money; and when they had lost all that they had about them, they would sometimes pledge a part of their wearing apparel, rather than

give up the pursuit of the Game. The Duke of Burgundy, according to an old historian, having lost sixty franks at Palm-play with the Duke of Bourbon, Messire William de Lyon, and Messire Guy de la Trimouille, and not having money enough to pay them, gave his girdle as a pledge for the remainder; and shortly afterwards he left the same girdle with the Comte d'Eu for eighty franks, which he also lost at tennis.

"At the time when Tennis-play was taken up seriously by the nobility, new regulations were made in the Game, and covered courts erected, wherein it might be practised without any interruption from the weather. In the sixteenth century, Tennis Courts were common in England, and the establishment of such places countenanced by the example of the Monarchs. In the Vocabulary of Commenius, we see a rude representation of a Tennis Court divided by a line stretched in the middle, and the players standing on either side with their rackets ready to receive and return the ball, which the rules of the Game required to be stricken over the line.

"We have undoubted authority to prove that Henry the Seventh was a Tennis-Player;* and his son Henry who succeeded him, in the early part of his reign, was much attached to this diversion, which

* Mr. Strutt, in a note on this passage, quotes the following entry in a MS. Register of this King's expenses. "Item, for the King's loss at Tennis, *twelve-pence*; for the loss of balls there, *three-pence*." Hence he infers that the Game was played abroad, for the loss of balls would hardly have happened in a Tennis-Court.

propensity, as Hall assures us, being perceived by ‘certayne craftie persons aboute him, they brought in Frenchmen and Lombards to make wagers with hym, and so he lost muche money, but when he perceyved their crafte, he eschued the company, and let them goe.’ He did not, however, give up the amusement: for we find him, according to the same historian, in the thirteenth year of his reign, playing at Tennis with the Emperor Maximilian for his partner, against the Prince of Orange and the Marques of Brandenborow; ‘the Earl of Devonshire stopped on the Prince’s side,’ says my author, ‘and the Lord Edmond on the other side, and they departed even handes on both sides, after eleven games fully played.’ Among the additions that King Henry made to Whitehall, if Stow be correct, were ‘divers fair Tennis-Courts, Bowling-Allies, and a Cock-Pit.’

“James the First, if not himself a Tennis-player, speaks of the pastime with commendation, and recommends it to his son as a species of exercise becoming a prince. Charles the Second frequently diverted himself with playing at Tennis, and had particular kind of dresses made for that purpose.

“A French writer speaks of a damsel named Margot, who resided at Paris, and played at Hand-Tennis with the palm, and also with the back of her hand, better than any man; and what is most surprising, adds my author, at that time the game was played with the naked hand, or at best with a double glove.”

Such are the anecdotes of the early history of Tennis, collected by the industry of Mr. Strutt. For the length of the above quotation from so popular an author, some apology is perhaps due to the reader. It has in fact been given for the double purpose of furnishing, at one glance, all the information which it seems practicable to obtain on this interesting subject, and of connecting, or rather enlarging the view which has been taken of it by this diligent and amusing writer, to whose researches and graphic delineations the antiquities of our country are peculiarly indebted. Had he in the present instance gone a little farther, by searching an original authority, instead of contenting himself with quoting it at second hand, he might have ascertained, with sufficient precision, the period at which Tennis was first played in its present form.

The observations at the commencement of the above quotation, as well as the anecdote of the female player Margot,* are cited by Mr. Strutt from the "Essais Historiques sur Paris" of M. Saint-Foix, whose authority was the celebrated French antiquary, Pasquier. That author, in his work entitled "Les Recherches de la France,"† relates, that while a

* This damsel, who may fairly be described as the *Joan of Arc* of Tennis, was contemporary with that distinguished heroine. According to Pasquier, she was a native of Hainault, and went in 1427, when she was 28 years of age, to Paris, where she played "de l'avant main et de l'arriere main tres puissamment, tres malicieusement, et tres habilement, comme pouvoit faire homme, et y avoit peu d'hommes qu'ell'e ne gagnat, si ces n'etoient les plus puissans joueurs."

† Fol. 1643. p. 382.

young man, he was informed by a person named Gastelier, (then 76 years of age) who had been a great player in his youth, that within his recollection, the game had been played solely with the hand, some persons using it uncovered, and others protecting it with a double glove. This glove was succeeded by a sort of net work of cords and tendons, and finally was introduced the raquet, "telle," says Pasquier, "que nous voyons aujourd'hui, en laissant la *sophis-tiquerie de Gand.*" The anecdote thus related tends to fix the date of modern Tennis. Pasquier was born in 1528, and supposing the fact to have been communicated to him when he was about twenty, by an informant of 76, the result will lead us to ascribe the invention of the raquet to a period not many years antecedent or subsequent to 1500.

Our great national Dramatist, in a celebrated passage in his historical play of Henry the Fifth, has probably led many of our readers to suppose the terms now used at Tennis to have been about a century older than the date which is above assigned to them. In the answer which the gallant hero of Agincourt gives to the Ambassadors who brought him a scornful present of a tun of balls from the Dauphin, Shakspeare makes him say,

" When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
We will in France (by God's grace) play a set
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.
Tell him he hath made a match with such a wrangler,
That all the Courts of France will be disturbed
With chases."

In this instance, however, as in a multitude of others,

our illustrious poet transferred the customs of his own age to the period intended to be represented in his drama. His favourite chronicler, Holinshed, who furnished him with his historical details, simply relates that the Embassadors “brought with them a barrell of *Paris* balles, which from their mayster they presented to him for a token, that was taken in verie ill part, as sent in scorn to signifie that it was more meet for the king to pass the time with such childeſh exercise than to attempt any worthie exploit. Wherefore the K. wrote to him, that yer ought long, he would toſſe him ſome London balles that per chance ſhould ſhake the walles of the best Court in France.” Thus it appears that, of the technical phrases used by Shakspeare, Holinshed only ſupplied him with the quibble on the term *Court*, and even this ſeems to have been a poetical flouriſh of the old chronicler’s pen. The firſt notice of this historical anecdote (interesting from its relation to Tennis, and ſtill more from its connexiōn with one of the proudest achievements of British valour) is to be found in the Latin chronicle of a monkish writer, named Thomas Otterbourne, who was contemporary with the event. He drily tells us that “Rege exiſtente apud Kenilworth, Karlolus, regis Francorum filius, Dolphinus vocatus, misit pilas Parisianis ad ludendum cum pueris. Cui Rex Anglorum rescripsit, dicens, ſe in brevi pilas missurum Londoniarum quibus terreret et confunderet ſua tecta.”* These

* Duo Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores veteres, ed. Hearne.
Oxon. 1732, tom. i. p. 274.

Paris balls, however, are by Caxton, in his Continuation of Higden's Polycronicon, printed in 1482, called "tenyse balles," that term, though apparently unknown in France, having at this early period been brought into use in England.

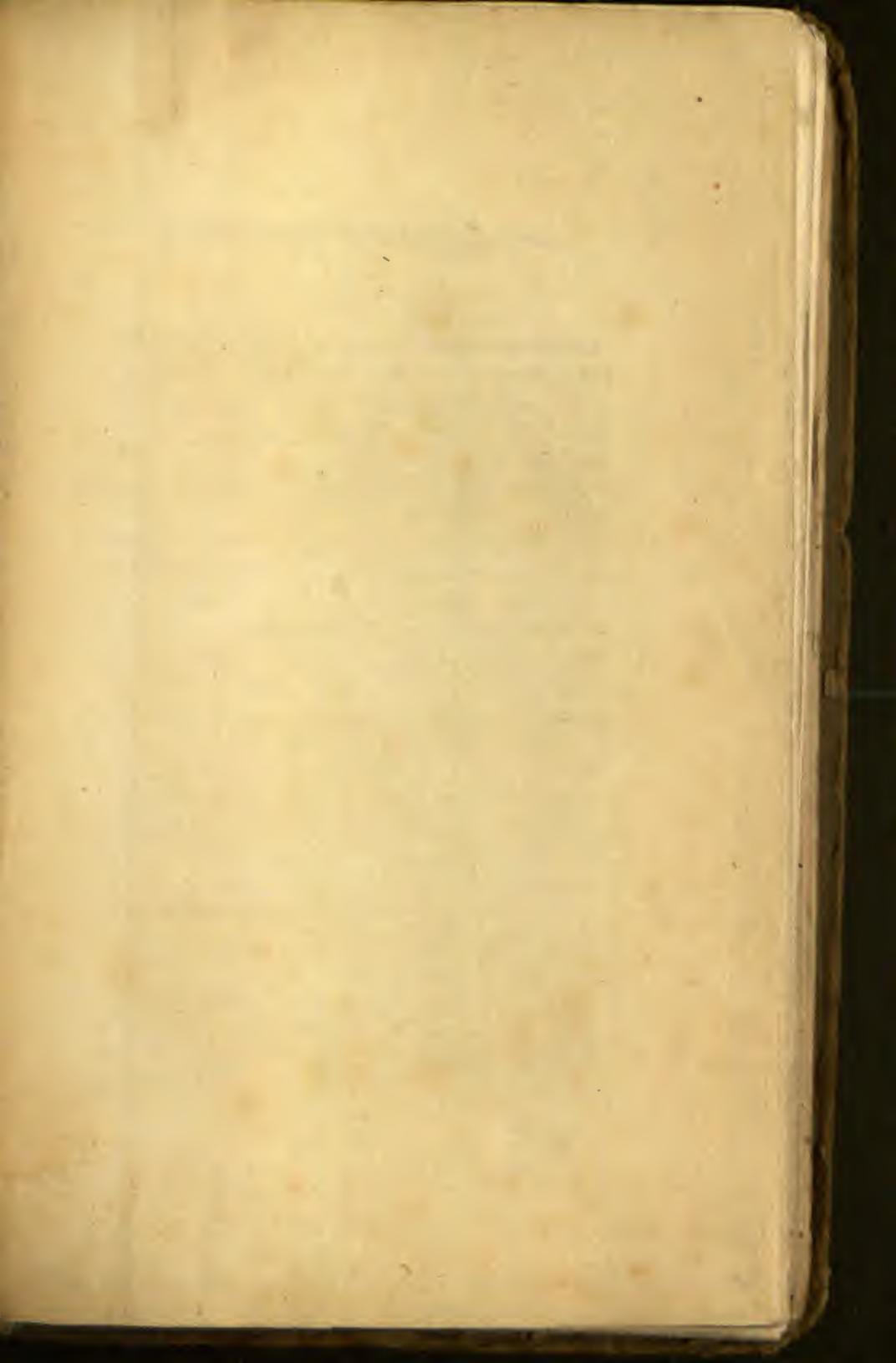
Although the game as it is now played with the Racket appears from the foregoing enquiry not to have been anterior to the reign of Henry VII. it seems equally certain that it was played with the hand in England, as well as in France, at a much earlier period. A statute passed in 1388 (12 Ric. II. cap. 6.) regulates the pastimes of servants and labourers, allowing them to use bows and arrows on Sundays and holidays, but directing them to abstain from playing at *hand* or foot ball. The old translation of this statute uses the term "tenys," but the words of the act in its original Norman French are, "et lessent tout outrement *les Jeues as pelotes*, sibū a *meyn* come à *piéce*." The translation, however, seems to ascertain the game intended to be thus proscribed. It would appear from this aristocratical enactment that Tennis was then considered, as it still is, a pastime for princes, and for the privileged orders.

It remains only to say a word or two on the derivation of the word Tennis. This, like other etymological questions, might, if pursued, lead to almost endless discussion. Dr. Johnson adopts the suggestion of Skinner, that it is derived from the word *tenez*, "take it," "hold it," or "there it goes," used by the French when they drive the ball. This conjecture

is perhaps more plausible than satisfactory. Skinner, indeed, offers another, which Johnson has not quoted, namely, that it has its origin from the French word *tente*, with reference to the covered building in which the game is played. But this will probably be thought a more strained etymology than the former. It would be at least an equally fair guess to ascribe its derivation to the old Norman sense of the participle *tenes* or *tenez*, *bound*, in allusion to the cords or tendons with which, as it appears in a preceding passage of this note, the hand was formerly covered. After all, it may perhaps seem rather unnatural to resort to the French language for the derivation of an English term which is altogether unknown in France, where the game is universally called *le Jeu de la Paume*. Whatever may have been its origin, it is of an old date. Caxton, as we have before seen, used the word *tenyse* in 1482, though in the subsequent editions of his work the spelling is *tenys*, and in other early printed books it is called *tenice*. The unsettled state, however, of our orthography at that period forbids these varieties from becoming the ground-work of any speculations; nor does it seem at all expedient to lengthen out this note, already sufficiently bulky, by offering conjectures which the reader may multiply at pleasure, without much hope perhaps of arriving at the truth.

FINIS.

5102



R.B.P.
GV
995
L95
1822

